



2011 NAEP Results for Alaska and the Nation

Alaska, like most states, had no changes on its scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) from 2009 to 2011. NAEP assesses students in grade 4 and grade 8 in reading and mathematics every other year. For the national public score between 2009 and 2011, there was no change for grade 4 reading, a 2 point increase for grade 8 reading, and a 1 point increase for both grade 4 and grade 8 math.

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics released the national and state results for 2011 for what it calls the nation's report card on Nov. 1, 2011. The assessments are given every two years.

Samples of fourth-graders and eighth-graders in each state were tested on reading and mathematics. Their scores are reported by state averages so states can be compared with each other and to the nation as a whole. Average scale scores are reported for each state and nationally. Scores are not reported for individual schools or students.

Four states increased their grade 4 reading scores with a decrease in two states. Ten states had an increase in their grade 8 reading scores. Eight states and the District of Columbia had an increase in grade 4 math scores with a decrease for one state. Twelve states and the District of Columbia had an increase in grade 8 math scores with a decrease for one state.

Alaska's 2011 grade 4 reading score of 208 is statistically the same as the 2003 grade 4 reading score of 212. However, since the nation's grade 4 reading score has increased from 216 in 2003 to 220 in 2011, Alaska's gap to the nation's reading score has increased from a difference of 4 points in 2003 to a difference of 12 points in 2011. The 2011 gap between Alaska and the public for grade 8 reading is 2 points and for grade 4 math it is 4 points. For grade 8 math Alaska and the public both have a score of 283.

Since 2003, the first year Alaska took part in both math and reading NAEP assessments, Alaska has increased its NAEP scores for grade 8 reading and for grade 4 and grade 8 math. The grade 8 reading score has increased from 256 in 2003 to 261 in 2011. The grade 4 math score has increased from 233 in 2003 to 236 in 2011. The grade 8 math score has increased from 279 in 2003 to 283 in 2011.

Alaska continues to have one of the highest percentages of English Language Learners (ELL) among states. For grade 4 reading, Alaska's ELL percentage of 13% places it among the top ten states for ELL percentages and slightly above the national average of 11%. (For grade 4, the state with the highest percentage, California, has an ELL percentage of 31% and the next highest state, Nevada, has a percentage of 27%.) For grade 8, Alaska's ELL percentage of 10% ties it with New Mexico and Nevada;

only California, with an ELL percentage of 17%, ranks higher for eighth grade. Nationally, for grade 4 reading, 82% of ELL students are Hispanic. In Alaska for grade 4, 57% of ELL students are Alaska Native/American Indian.

About 5,500 grade 4 Alaska students and 4,800 grade 8 students took part in the NAEP reading and mathematics assessments in 2011. This is about half the students in the state for each grade.